

Summary of Plan Actions

NATURAL RESOURCES

Air quality:

- Seek class I designation.
- Continue air monitoring program, participate national air quality network, and monitor ozone and particulate matter.

Viewsheds:

- Prepare guidelines for developed areas to create harmony between the built environment and the natural environment.
- Implement objectives for communications equipment proposals.

Night Sky:

- Cooperate with neighbors and local government agencies to minimize artificial light intrusion.
- Use artificial outdoor lighting limited to basic safety requirements and shielded to keep light on the intended subject and out of the night sky.
- Establish baseline light measurements for night use for monitoring changes over time.

Noise and Overflights:

- Strive to preserve the natural quiet and sounds associated with the physical and biological resources.
- Collaborate with the Department of Defense to minimize impacts on visitors and resources from military overflights.

Water Resources:

- Assertively compile water related baseline data.
- Seek to protect, perpetuate, and possibly restore surface water and groundwater as integral components of Park aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.
- Surface water and groundwater withdrawn for the Park's use will be the amount necessary to achieve Park purposes.
- Strive to maintain the water levels at Devils Hole.
- Monitor wells and springs including Darwin Falls and in at least nine water delivery systems.
- Avoid occupancy and modification of floodplain and wetland areas.
- Defend federally reserved water rights through the state of California and Nevada administrative processes and, if necessary, seek judicial remedy in the appropriate courts.
- Identify as a federally reserved water right all unappropriated water from any water source identified on federal lands within the boundaries of designated wilderness and/or park areas in the California desert.
- Examine the use of and need for all guzzlers,

livestock tanks, and troughs. Eliminate unneeded and/or unused facilities.

- Retain water developments for native plants and wildlife that are needed to mitigate for local water losses due to previous human activities.
- Restore natural water sources to be self-sustaining.

Paleontological Resources:

- Protect and preserve paleontological resources for public enjoyment, interpretation, and scientific research in accordance with Park management objectives and approved resource management plans.
- Seek to develop collaborative partnerships with government agencies, academic institutions, and public and private organizations with paleontological resource management or research capabilities/expertise.

Geological Resources:

- Protect geological features through random patrols of the backcountry as well as limited public closures to protect sensitive sites.
- USGS will map the park's exposed geology.

Cave Resources:

- Avoid development of caves and to perpetuate natural conditions, while seeking to protect the resource.

Species and Habitats of Special Consideration:

- Identify and promote the conservation of all federally listed or proposed threatened or endangered species and their critical habitats within Park boundaries in ways that were consistent with the purposes of the Endangered Species Act.
- Identify and map distribution of plant and animal species considered rare or unique to the Park.
- Continue to manage and protect the 40-acre area known as Devils Hole, its endangered pupfish and other sensitive aquatic and terrestrial plants and animals.
- The FWS prepared a biological opinion for the Devils Hole pupfish on August 14, 2001.
- Conduct Devils Hole pupfish counts on a biannual basis.
- A site management plan for the Eureka Dunes area addresses protection of sensitive species.

Introduced Species:

- Nonnative plants and animals will not be introduced except under the most unusual circumstances.

Burros:

- Adopt "no burro or wild horse" strategy that exists for the former monument lands and apply it to newly added Park lands.

- Removal of horses and burros from Park lands will be completed through a three phase removal program. Phase one consists of a Park-wide live capture program that will be in effect for a maximum of five years. Phase two consists of soliciting interested animal protection groups to begin removing the remaining few animals. An agreement will be signed with the group(s) to provide up to 2 years to remove the remaining burros and wild horses from the Park at their expense. In phase three, NPS staff will eliminate the remaining few animals in the most cost-effective and humane manner to achieve a zero population. Removal efforts could involve a variety of techniques including, but not limited to shooting, wrangler/helicopter roundups, and netting-removal with helicopters. Phase three will continue for an indefinite time.
- Develop a cooperative agreement that assures that the BLM will take steps to control herds adjacent to the Park and will remove trespass burros and wild horses.

Other Nonnative Species:

- Eradicate exotic species to the extent feasible.
- Control aquatic species, such as mosquito fish, goldfish, crayfish, and bullfrogs, to a level eliminating their adverse impacts, or extirpate altogether from Park habitats.
- Actively pursue removal of nonnative tamarisk.
- Continue limited programs to control Russian thistle and hornwort.

Disturbed Land Restoration:

- Seek to perpetuate native plant life as part of natural ecosystems.
- In natural areas landscape conditions caused by natural phenomena such as landslides, earthquakes, floods, and natural fires will not be modified unless required for public safety, protection of NPS facilities, or necessary reconstruction of dispersed-use facilities, such as trails.
- Rehabilitate abandoned mine sites.
- Cultural zones will be managed as historic landscapes.

Fire Management:

- Assess and document the state of existing fire effects research in desert ecosystems and formulate a desert fire management strategy.
- Suppression of wildfires, and implementation of

all fire management actions using methods, equipment and tactics which cause the least impact to natural and cultural resources.

- Develop fire management strategies based on the best available science, field observations of fire effects and post-burn monitoring of selected sites.
- Periodically update the Park "Fire Management Plan."

Research:

- Procure the best science to meet resource protection and management requirements.
- Issue research permits or scientific collection permits to researchers from universities, museums or other agencies when their studies are compatible with park purposes and consistent with legislation.

Inventorying and Monitoring:

- Develop and implement a systematic, integrated program to identify, inventory, and monitor the Park's natural resources.
- Update *Natural and Cultural Resources Management Plan* to reflect the changes that are proposed in this *General Management Plan*.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Develop and implement a systematic, integrated program to identify, inventory, monitor, evaluate, and nominate archeological sites, historic properties, cultural landscapes, and ethnographic resources to the national register, and manage, protect, and preserve such listed properties in a way that will preserve their documented archeological, architectural, ethnographic, historic, or research values.
- Develop and implement a systematic applied cultural resource research program.
- Resource Management Plan will address the requirements, projects, and funding to implement the cultural resource program.

NATIVE AMERICAN INTERESTS

- 314 acres at Furnace Creek in Death Valley National Park encompassing the present Timbisha Village Site have been transferred to the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe.
- Other arrangements authorizing tribal access to and traditional uses of, certain designated areas which will remain in public ownership have been recommended.
- Development and resource use activities will be subject to NEPA and public review.

VISITOR USE, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES

Interpretation:

- Interpretive program will integrate the geological, cultural, and biological aspects of the Park.
- Improve the educational outreach program in surrounding communities and develop partnerships with local schools and similar groups.
- Develop comprehensive interpretive plan to replace the 1990 interpretive prospectus.
- Seek additional ways to improve the living history program or other methods of interpreting Scotty's Castle.
- Integrate interpretation of prehistoric and contemporary Native American cultures into park-wide interpretive themes, focusing on human adaptation to the desert environment.

Information/Orientation:

- Where possible provide interpretation and orientation information to visitors before they enter the Park.
- Provide interpretive services wherever NPS staff could effectively connect with the public to increase their understanding and appreciation of Park resources.
- Develop unstaffed orientation and information stations within the Park along the Park's five major entrance roads that receive relatively high levels of traffic.
- Post signs or exhibits at key road intersections leading to significant features.
- Upgrade interpretive wayside exhibits within the Park in accordance with a wayside exhibit plan.
- Cooperate with other agencies and organizations to make information available along approach routes to the Park.

Visitor Facilities:

- All improvements to visitor facilities will be subject to federal requirements to meet accessibility standards for people with disabilities.
- Entrance stations are planned for State Highway 190 on the east and west sides of the Park.
- Operate major visitor centers at Furnace Creek and Scotty's Castle.
- Prepare a comprehensive design plan to update and improve the Furnace Creek visitor center.
- Other structures at Scotty's Castle might be opened for public tours or adapted for other uses if these actions are compatible with recommendations from the historic resource study/historic structure report, the goals of restoring the resource's cultural landscape, and are operationally appropriate.

- Comprehensive design packages for visitor facilities will strive to balance resource protection with visitor access and safety, minimize impacts on sensitive resources, and improve the visual quality of the areas and overall visitor experience.
- Improve existing campgrounds by eliminating safety hazards, better defining and separating sites, improving restrooms, and adding amenities such as newer picnic tables.
- Redesign the Stovepipe Wells campground.
- Redesign Sunset, Texas Spring, and Furnace Creek campgrounds to accommodate average winter demand and improve camping conditions.

Recreational Activities:

- Support recreational activities compatible with management objectives and visitor needs.
- Additional day use areas may be established in the new additions to the Park.
- Small, primitive campsites may be established in some remote areas of the Park to offer alternative camping experiences.
- Complete backcountry/wilderness management plan which will address camping issues.
- Establish inventory and monitoring program to gather data on backcountry visitor use and related impacts associated with car and other types of camping.
- Management actions may include required camping at designated campsites and or closure of areas to camping.
- Prepare a survey and inventory of cabins.

Visitor Use in Saline Valley:

- Prepare a site specific management plan for the Saline Valley in consultation with interested public through the NEPA process.
- Limit soaking tubs/spas to the current level of improvements.
- Protect the Upper Springs from human improvements and use from burros.
- Maintain Saline Valley Road to its current surface condition by Inyo County.
- Make analysis of the Chicken Strip airstrip to determine whether to retain it under 36CFR or whether it should be closed due to safety and/or resource impact concerns.
- The proposed site plan will also consider options for the active restoration of the Upper Springs to a natural condition.

Visitor Use Fees:

- Explore options for fee collection revenues consistent with congressional direction, including collection by third parties.

- Collect entrance fees at the Furnace Creek visitor center, Beatty, the Grapevine Entrance Station, Stovepipe Wells, and Baker.
- Develop entrance stations on State Highway 190 near east and west Park boundaries.

Commercial Services:

- All commercial businesses that operate in the Park are required to obtain an incidental business permit.
- Continue commercial services at Stovepipe Wells and at Scotty's Castle.
- Work with the private commercial operations at Furnace Creek and Panamint Springs to achieve mutual objectives and resolve potential problems.
- Organized recreational activities, that originate from outside of the Park and for which a fee is charged (such as guided motor coach tours, guided horseback and hiking trips, photography workshops, nature seminars, etc.), are required to obtain an incidental business permit to conduct these activities.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

Scotty's Castle:

- Prepare a development concept plan to establish various facility requirements, the appropriateness of relocating maintenance and curatorial functions, visitor circulation patterns, staffing levels, and the location of employee housing.

Furnace Creek and Cow Creek:

- Prepare a development concept plan for administrative and visitor facilities at Furnace Creek and administrative facilities at Cow Creek.

Grapevine:

- Complete a development concept plan to remove unsightly and inadequate NPS housing and maintenance facilities from a public use area, to consolidate certain functions, provide more adequate housing for Park and concession employees, assure appropriate visitor services, visitor information, safety, and resource protection.

Stovepipe Wells:

- Renovate Stovepipe Wells in accordance with a site management plan. The concessions program at Stovepipe Wells will be retained for the foreseeable future.

Wildrose:

- Develop a site plan for the Wildrose area to determine the future direction of the facilities and use of the area.

ROADS AND CIRCULATION

Roads:

- Produce a road management plan to determine such things as the status of duplicate road sections, road surface conditions, and the level of maintenance.
- New roads will unlikely be created in the future unless there is strong justification to do so.
- No routine maintenance on high clearance and four-wheel drive backcountry roads. Occasional or emergency maintenance will occur as appropriate.

Trails:

- Hiking allowed on open trails; equestrian use allowed in most areas.
- No new trails currently planned but will be considered in the wilderness/backcountry management plan.
- The wilderness/backcountry management plan will address specific trail use by hikers, equestrians, and people with disabilities. It will also address the need for a Panamint Crest trail.

Signs:

- Prepare a sign plan to ensure that the vision of signs as unobtrusive, minimal, and blend with the natural environment, is carried out.
- Signs will assist visitors with direction and location and will allow the backcountry roads to remain low key.

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

Park Administration:

- Furnace Creek will continue to serve as the main administrative headquarters for the Park with a visitor center and an administrative office.
- Replace nonnative plants and landscapes with native plants and landscapes around administrative and visitor facilities where appropriate for interpretive, aesthetic, water conservation and other management purposes.
- Some traditional plantings may be retained.
- Locate some facilities outside the Park, consistent with the existing management direction and actions proposed in this plan. This will include, but will not be limited to, visitor facilities in Beatty, Baker, and Lone Pine, as well as possibly other communities. It also includes the potential establishment of a satellite office in or around areas east of the Park to provide office space for some employees, storage and possibly curation.

Employee Housing:

- A development concept plan underway for the Grapevine area will recommend providing housing and replacing the existing trailers for the northern district of the Park. Ongoing trailer replacement with permanent houses will continue until completed.
- Prior to constructing additional housing for employees, evaluate the location of the housing and make a determination about whether private housing elsewhere within a one hour drive could serve the same need, and whether the total housing units are the minimum necessary to meet the mission of the Park.

Solid Waste Disposal:

- Haul solid waste disposal to approved landfills outside the Park.
- Expand recycling program.

LANDOWNERSHIP AND USE

Park Boundary and Authorized Acreage:

- No boundary changes proposed. Clerical or drafting corrections may be made to the maps and legal descriptions.

Wilderness:

- Manage wilderness areas for the use and enjoyment of the American people in a way that would leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness.
- Motorized access through wilderness to maintain grazing developments could be considered under section 708 of the CDPA.
- Use minimum tool determination prior to granting approval for motorized/mechanical equipment use within wilderness.
- The California Desert Protection Act modifies some provisions of the Wilderness Act.
- Continue process of determining and mapping wilderness boundaries.

Land Acquisition:

- A Land Protection Plan has been prepared.
- Seek funds to acquire private lands and interests in the Park based on priorities presented in the Land Protection Plan.
- Donations and exchanges of real property from willing sellers will be a priority, and third party acquisitions from willing sellers will be encouraged.
- Exchange of state school sections in the new lands will continue to be actively exchanged pursuant to the California Desert Protection Act direction.

Mineral Development Activities

- Administer mineral development activities under existing laws and regulations applicable to such activities.
- Proposed mining operations must file a plan of operations and must meet the approval standards provided in the regulations and post a performance bond equivalent to the cost of reclamation before an operation will proceed.
- Section 305 of the California Desert Protection Act withdrew the Park from all forms of entry, appropriation or disposal under the public land laws; from location, entry and patent under the United States mining laws; and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral and geothermal leasing and the sale of mineral materials.
- Seek funding to initiate acquisition of mineral rights whenever a proposed mineral development fails to meet the regulatory approval standards and no alternative development scenario is feasible.
- Undertake a sensitive resource analysis based on an objective analysis of physical, biological, cultural and visitor use values relative to projected mining impacts.

Abandoned Mines:

- Conduct a comprehensive inventory of all Abandoned Mineral Lands (AML) sites to serve as the basis for future planning and reclamation program implementation.

Sand and Gravel for Road Maintenance:

- Evaluate use of borrow sources for road maintenance during the preparation of the road management plan.

Grazing:

- No grazing is permitted on the former monument lands.
- As authorized by the California Desert Protection Act of 1994, the privilege of cattle grazing within the Park shall continue at no more than the October 31, 1994 level and is subject to applicable NPS regulations, policies, and Park management direction.
- No grazing will be permitted on the NPS portions of the Eureka Valley or Lacey-Cactus-McCloud BLM allotments. No permit has been issued on the Last Chance allotment since 1996 due to the lack of forage. The NPS considers this area of the Park to be permanently retired from grazing. Work with the permittee on the Hunter Mountain allotment to develop grazing practices and levels, not to exceed 1,105 AUMs through

- development of a grazing management plan.
- Work to acquire base property from willing ranchers.
- A grazing management plan will include how many cattle and the time and place where these cattle will be allowed to graze, seasonal restrictions, the placement/movement of mineral blocks and water facilities as a tool to alter cattle use patterns, pasture rotation, etc.
- Fees will be based on BLM schedules and NPS Special Use Permit costs. Grazing fees will be used for Park resource management and restoration projects.
- Require permittee to access wilderness on foot or horseback, similar to other users.
- Use a minimum tool determination prior to granting approval for motorized/mechanical equipment use within wilderness.
- If livestock use including water use degrades wilderness values, the number of livestock will be reduced to appropriate levels.

